

Message Text

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ACTION ACDA-10

INFO OCT-01 SSO-00 ISO-00 ACDE-00 NSCE-00 ERDA-05

CIAE-00 EUR-12 H-01 INR-07 IO-13 L-03 NSAE-00

OIC-02 OMB-01 PA-01 PM-04 PRS-01 SP-02 SS-15

USIA-06 TRSE-00 NSC-05 /089 W

-----061759Z 086973 /42

R 061726Z APR 77

FM AMEMBASSY BONN

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 7221

INFO SECDEF WASHDC

AMEMBASSY LONDON

USMISSION NATO BRUSSELS

USDEL MBFR VIENNA

USNMR SHAPE

CINC EUR VAIHINGEN

AMEMBASSY PARIS

AMEMBASSY MOSCOW

AMEMBASSY BELGRADE

AMEMBASSY BUCHAREST

AMEMBASSY BUDAPEST

AMEMBASSY PRAGUE

AMEMBASSY SOFIA

AMEMBASSY WARSAW

AMEMBASSY BERLIN

USMISSION USBERLIN

C O N F I D E N T I A L SECTION 01 OF 02 BONN 06097

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: PARM, NATO, MBFR, GW

SUBJECT: MBFR: GENSCHER PUBLICLY REAFFIRMS

FRG POSITION

BEGIN SUMMARY: THE CHANCELLOR, THE FOREIGN MINISTER,
AND SPD PARLIAMENTARY GROUP LEADER WEHNER HAVE ALL
COMMENTED PUBLICLY ON MBFR DURING THE LAST WEEK AND A
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HALF, WITH WEHNER ADVOCATING "SIMULTANEOUS, SYMMETRICAL"
CUTS AND A SERIOUS LOOK AT THE EAST'S FREEZE PROPOSAL.
THE UPSHOT OF THE PUBLISHED INTERVIEWS WAS A STRONG
REAFFIRMATION OF THE KEY ELEMENTS OF THE GERMAN POSITION
BY GENSCHER WHO STRESSED AGAIN THE FRG'S GOALS OF
APPROXIMATE PARITY AND COLLECTIVITY. END SUMMARY.

1. IN AN INTERVIEW APPEARING IN THE APRIL 6 EDITION OF THE BONN "GENERAL ANZEIGER," FOREIGN MINISTER GENSCHER REAFFIRMED THE FRG'S COMMITMENT TO PURSUING DETENTE WITHOUT ENDANGERING SECURITY. GENSCHER ALSO SPOKE OF THE FOLLOWING FUNDAMENTAL GERMAN POSITIONS ON MBFR:

-- IT WAS CLEAR THAT MBFR COULD ONLY HAVE A CHANCE FOR SUCCESS AS A COMMON ALLIANCE PROJECT AND THAT IT CAN BE NEGOTIATED ONLY ON THE BASIS OF THE ALLIANCE POSITION.

-- PARITY IN THE SENSE OF AN APPROXIMATE BALANCE OF GROUND FORCES AND A MITIGATION OF THE IMBALANCE IN TANKS REMAINS A KEY ELEMENT OF THE NEGOTIATIONS. A CLARIFICATION OF THE DATA BASE WOULD THEREFORE BE AN IMPORTANT CONTRIBUTION IN ORDER TO ACHIEVE CONCRETE NEGOTIATIONS IN VIENNA ON A FIRST AGREEMENT.

-- THE COLLECTIVITY PRINCIPLE (I.E., COMMON COLLECTIVE CEILINGS WITHIN BOTH ALLIANCE SYSTEMS) MUST ALSO BE PROTECTED, BECAUSE OTHERWISE A SPECIAL STATUS FOR THE BUNDESWEHR WOULD EXIST. ALSO, FUTURE CLOSER EUROPEAN COOPERATION WITHIN THE NATO FRAMEWORK MAY NOT BE HINDERED.

-- A FREEZE ON EXISTING TROOP STRENGTHS OR EVEN SYMBOLIC REDUCTIONS IS NOT ACCEPTABLE WITHOUT FULFILLMENT OF THESE CONDITIONS.

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2. THE GENSCHER INTERVIEW COUNTERED ONE GIVEN ON MARCH 29 BY SPD PARLIAMENTARY GROUP LEADER HERBERT WEHNER ON "DEUTSCHE WELLE" IN WHICH WEHNER INTER ALIA SUGGESTED THAT TROOP REDUCTIONS BE "SIMULTANEOUS, SYMMETRICAL AND UNIVERSAL" AND THAT SERIOUS CONSIDERATION BE GIVEN TO THE EAST'S "FREEZE" PROPOSAL. WEHNER'S REMARKS WERE STRONGLY ATTACKED LATER IN THE WEEK BY CDU FOREIGN POLICY SPOKESMAN MERTES WHO CHARGED THAT WEHNER WAS A "SECURITY RISK" AND THAT HIS COMMENTS WEAKENED BONN'S POSITIONS AND THOSE OF THE ENTIRE WESTERN ALLIANCE. MERTES REJECTED THE EASTERN FREEZE PROPOSAL AND ALSO SAID REDUCTIONS WOULD HAVE TO BE ASYMMETRICAL IN ORDER TO REACH PARITY.

3. CHANCELLOR SCHMIDT ENTERED THE LISTS IN A MARCH 30 PRESS CONFERENCE IN WHICH HE INDICATED THAT THE FRG WAS WORKING ON ITS OWN PROPOSALS TO OVERCOME THE STALEMATE IN MBFR BUT THAT IT WAS TOO EARLY TO DISCUSS THEM PUBLICLY AS LONG AS THERE WAS NO SUCCESS IN SALT II.

(COMMENT: FRG ARMS CONTROL COMMISSIONER RUTH CATEGORICALLY DENIED LAST WEEK TO AN EMBASSY OFFICER THAT THE FRG WAS WORKING ON ITS "OWN PROPOSALS.") SCHMIDT INDICATED FURTHER THAT HE WANTED TO TALK TO GENERAL SECRETARY BREZHNEV AND PRESIDENT CARTER FIRST REGARDING THE SUBSTANTIVE SHAPE OF THE MBFR NEGOTIATIONS. HE REPEATED AN OLD THEME THAT A POLITICAL IMPULSE WAS

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C O N F I D E N T I A L SECTION 02 OF 02 BONN 06097

NECESSARY IN VIENNA AND HE EXPRESSLY AFFIRMED THE FRG POSITION ON EVENTUAL PARITY. BY PARITY, THE CHANCELLOR

CONTINUED, HE DID NOT MEAN EACH SOLDIER, TANK AND AIR-CRAFT HAD TO BALANCE ONE ANOTHER. SCHMIDT NOTED THAT MBFR WAS MORE COMPLEX AND MORE COMPLICATED THAN SALT BECAUSE OF THE COUNTRIES PARTICIPATING AND THE WEAPONS
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INVOLVED. THE CHANCELLOR DID NOT EXCLUDE THE POSSIBILITY OF A FREEZE SO LONG AS AGREEMENT ON FURTHER MBFR STEPS COULD BE ACHIEVED.

4. SCHMIDT ALSO INDICATED THAT HE SHARED WEHNER'S VIEWS AND HAD DISCUSSED THEM PERSONALLY WITH HIM. SCHMIDT SAID WEHNER DID NOT MEAN TO CALL INTO QUESTION THE GOAL OF PARITY BY ADVOCATING SYMMETRICAL REDUCTIONS. HE SAID THE FRG MAINTAINED THIS POSITION WITH ITS ALLIES.

5. COMMENT: WE INTERPRET WEHNER'S COMMENTS ON MBFR DURING HIS LONG INTERVIEW ON "DEUTSCHE WELLE" AS A CRY OF FRUSTRATION THAT NOTHING MUCH SEEMS TO BE HAPPENING IN THE NEGOTIATIONS AND AS A SIGNAL TO THE SOVIETS THAT THE GERMANS WISH DETENTE TO CONTINUE. WEHNER AND SOME OTHER SPD FIGURES HAVE BEEN SAYING MORE OR LESS THE SAME THING FOR THE PAST SEVEN MONTHS. BOTH PRIOR TO AND FOLLOWING THE OCTOBER ELECTION CAMPAIGN, WEHNER WAS AMONG THOSE WITHIN THE SPD WHO STRONGLY ADVOCATED THE PURSUIT OF SERIOUS ARMS CONTROL NEGOTIATIONS WITH THE SOVIETS.

GENSCHER'S POLITICAL CONFIDANTS HAVE TOLD US THAT GENSCHER'S RIPOSTE WAS DESIGNED TO SET THE RECORD STRAIGHT ONCE AGAIN THAT THE FRG POSITION WAS THE ALLIANCE POSITION AND THAT LEADING SPD FIGURES DID NOT SPEAK FOR THE GOVERNMENT. THEY EXPECT THAT GENSCHER'S REMARKS WILL MAKE SOME SPD PEOPLE (WEHNER, BRANDT, EHMKE, PAWELCZYK) UNHAPPY. BY HIS PUBLIC STANCE, THE FOREIGN MINISTER HAS DEMONSTRATED AGAIN THAT THE FRG INTENDS TO WORK WITHIN AND FOR THE ALLIANCE POSITION.
END COMMENT.
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TAGS: PARM, GE, XH, NATO, MBFR, (GENSCHER, HANS-DIETRICH), (WEHNER, HERBERT)
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